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SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: INFORMATION MINISTER SAYS DAILY NEWS IS "ILLEGAL"

- [11.](#) In the continuing legal battle between the Associated Newspapers of Zimbabwe (ANZ), publishers of the independent daily "The Daily News," and the government of Zimbabwe over the mandatory registration of media houses and accreditation of journalists under the controversial Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act (AIPPA), Information Minister Jonathan Moyo, in his opposing affidavit filed in the Supreme Court this week, has accused the newspaper of "operating illegally." To date, the newspaper has neither applied for registration nor instructed its journalists to apply for accreditation at the government-controlled Media and Information Commission. ANZ filed an urgent application in the Supreme Court "to declare invalid and devoid of legal effect, sections of the Act which infringe on the rights of freedom of expression, association and compulsory acquisition of property provided for in the Constitution." The Chairman of the Media and Information Commission, Tafataona Mahoso, has also filed an opposing affidavit in support of the Information Minister Jonathan Moyo. No date has been set for the hearing of the matter.
- [12.](#) Meanwhile two international news agencies, Reuters and Agence France Press have obtained accreditation for their bureaus and news staff in Zimbabwe. They submitted their fees in United States dollars, as demanded by the Media and Information Commission. The Associated Press (AP) declined and closed its bureau, but retained two correspondents. Zimbabwean correspondents for foreign media have been advised by their lawyers that paying in American dollars would violate exchange control regulations - which bar Zimbabwe citizens and permanent residents from paying a Zimbabwean body such as the Media Commission in foreign currency. The Media and Information Commission is yet to decide on the way forward in terms of the payments issue. Under AIPPA all those who have been refused accreditation must cease practicing or risk being arrested.

SULLIVAN